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## Special Article - Canberra Past and Present

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### 1. Introductory

Canberra is the capital city of a continent, notable amongst other things as being the first in history committed to a policy of exclusive occupation by white people. When it is remembered that it is only 143 years since the colonization of Australia was inaugurated by Captain Arthur Phillip with a little more than 1,000 persons at Sydney Cove on the shores of Port Jackson; when it is remembered, moreover, that it is only 111 years since the first white man saw Canberra and the Federal Capital Territory, it is difficult to realize that this short period has been marked by the birth of a nation, finally symbolized by the establishment in May, 1927, of the component parts of that nation in a federal capital city. The occupation of Canberra begins a new era, during which Australia, owing to its geographical position with respect to the Pacific Ocean, may exert an increasing influence in world politics.

### 2. Discoveries by Early Explorers.

#### Difficulties Encountered

It is probable that, at the present time, more than nine-tenths of the continent are fully explored; it is thus difficult to realize that, for 25 years after Captain Phillip landed in Port Jackson, knowledge of the country inland was restricted to an area of about 1,500 square miles situated within a radius of about 30 miles of the site of the first settlement at Sydney Cove. The smallness of the known area was due to what were regarded as impassable natural barriers, i.e., on the north, the Hawkesbury River and the barren country on its left bank; on the west, the Blue Mountains, forming portion of the Great Divide extending throughout the length of the continent from Cape York to Cape Howe; and on the south, the gorges and barren country about the upper watershed of the Nepean River and the lower watershed of the Wollondilly River and their respective tributaries. The southern barrier, however, was penetrated and the Moss Vale district reached in 1798, but no settlement resulted.

#### Passage of the Blue Mountains

In May and June, 1813, the passage of the Blue Mountains was accomplished by the discovery of one of the only two possible routes, over the main Divide near the latitude of Port Jackson. Within a few months, the passage of the Blue Mountains was followed by the discovery of the Bathurst Plains, the Macquarie River, and the fertile country to the west of the mountains.

## **The Southern Barrier**

During the next four years, the "Southern Barrier" was again crossed, and, in 1817, Charles Throsby explored the country near Moss Vale and Sutton Forest, and penetration southerly towards the site of Canberra began. In 1818, Throsby and James Meehan, Deputy Surveyor-General, sought an overland route to Jervis Bay. After being entangled in the gorges of the Shoalhaven River, the party divided near Marulan. Throsby reached Jervis Bay, but Meehan, who failed, made other valuable discoveries. He followed the highlands west of the Shoalhaven River, and discovered Lake Bathurst, and, during his return journey traversed the fertile Goulburn Plains. In 1819, Throsby and John Rowley discovered a route connecting the Bathurst and Goulburn Plains, thus effecting the passage of the main Divide in a more southerly latitude.

## **Development following on Discovery**

These discoveries were rapidly followed by settlement. In 1815, a road was constructed across the Blue Mountains to Bathurst Plains, and, in 1820, a road to Goulburn Plains, which lie within 60 miles of Canberra. The natural boundaries which had defied conquest for 25 years, were passed, and the development of the vast interior of Australia was commenced.

The immensity of the task of the pioneers in overcoming these initial natural obstacles and making possible the extension of settlement thereby can be fully realized only by those conversant with the country in its natural state. It must be remembered that the pioneers were not experienced bushmen used to Australian conditions. They were immigrants from the well-settled counties and the small holdings of England, Scotland and Ireland. But they came of sturdy British stock, and the tasks they accomplished would redound to the credit of the most experienced Australian bushman.

## **3. Discoveries by Throsby and Wild**

### **General**

The two outstanding figures in the discovery of the Federal Capital Territory were Charles Throsby and Joseph Wild, each in his own way, a typical example of the virile pioneers of the Australian nation.

Charles Throsby, who was an educated Englishman, arrived in Australia in 1802 as a navel surgeon at the age of thirty-one years. He joined the colonial medical establishment, and, in 1804, was appointed to the settlement at Newcastle, four months after its foundation. In the following year, he was made commandant of that settlement and held the position until for health reasons he resigned in 1809. For the next eight years, he lived in a retirement on his land grant near Liverpool. As already noted, in the year 1804 he made his first exploring tour, and penetrated through the Bargo brush to the country near Moss Vale and Sutton Forest. In successive following years he discovered the overland routes to Jervis Bay and the Bathurst Plains via Moss Vale. In 1819 he became the first land holder in the southern districts by forming a stock station (now known as Throsby Park) on the Wingiecarribee River near Moss Vale. After exploring the Territory, he settled on his land grants and became one of the first non-official

members in the nominee Legislative Council in 1825. He died in 1828. He was successful as a surgeon, as an administrator, as an explorer, as a pioneer grazier, and as a pioneer legislator. Such varied phases in life were typical of the adaptability of many early pioneers.

Joseph Wild was illiterate, but, by instinct, a natural bushman and a natural observer. He was born in the year 1759, and was employed by Charles Throsby and participated in all Throsby's explorations. Wild was of sturdy physique, retaining his vitality to a great age. He was fifty-eight years of age at the date of Throsby's first exploring tour, and had reached eighty-eight when he was killed by a wild bull near the Wingiecarabee swamps.

When the road to Goulburn Plains was under construction in the year 1820, Throsby was charged with the general supervision, and Wild acted as overseer.

From the Aborigines, Throsby learned that there was a large lake, which they called Wee-ree-waa, near Lake Bathurst (known to them as Bundong) which had already been discovered by Meehan: that, about two days journey from this lake, there was a large river, which they had called Murrumbidgee; that this river communicated with the sea a long distance to the southward: and that its waters were tidal.

In August, 1820, Throsby sent Joseph Wild and the two men of the road party to search for the lake. On the 19th August, Throsby parted from these men 40 miles in advance of the road construction party, and, in the afternoon of the same day, Wild reached the lake at its northern end. During the ensuing two days, he and his two companions followed the eastern shore, and camped for the night of the 21st on Turallo creek, near Bungendore, at the southern end of the lake. On the following day, Wild ascended Gibraltar mountain and discovered "Snowy Mountains to the S.W", the first recorded glimpse by a white man of a part of the highest ranges in Australia. During the night of the 22nd, with his capacity for close observation, he noticed that the waters of the lake fell 6 inches, the first recorded observation of a daily rise and fall of the water level in the lake. He returned with his companions to the road construction camp on the Wollondilly River six days later.

In the following October, Governor Macquarie and J. T. Bigge, who held a Royal Commission to inquire into the condition of the Colony, visited the lakes. On the 27th of October, Macquarie, Bigge and their attendants encamped on the east side of the newly-discovered lake near Mount Ellenden or Governor's Hill, and, on the following day, Macquarie named it Lake George in honour of His Majesty King George III. Throsby accompanied Macquarie during his tour, and, whilst the party were at Lakes Bathurst and George, proceeded in advance and endeavoured to discover the Murrumbidgee River. In this he was unsuccessful, but he discovered the Yass River, or Boongaroon, as the Aborigines called it, and probably visited the north-eastern portion of the Federal Territory.

The zest for discovery continued, and Governor Macquarie forthwith decided to send a party, with provisions for one month, to discover the Murrumbidgee River. Wild was at once selected together with James Vaughan, a constable, and Charles Throsby Smith. The last-mentioned, who was a nephew of Charles Throsby, kept the journal.

The detailed instructions given to these men by Charles Throsby are of interest on account of the deductions implied therein. The men were ordered to proceed to Lake George and thence to the Yass River at the spot visited by Throsby and Vaughan in October, to follow the river down 'until you meet the tides way'; and then to observe "how long the ebb tide continues longer than the flood ". They were provided with acid to test for limestone. Throsby rightly assumed that the Yass River was a tributary of the Murrumbidgee, and that the latter river could be recognized by the "tides if the reports of the aborigines had been correct.

On the 2nd December, 1820, Wild and his companions were camped at the southern end of Lake George. On the following day, they travelled along the western side of the lake, ascended the

steep hills on that side at or near Geary's Gap, and camped for the night Shingle House Creek. Owing to heavy rain, they remained at this camp for the next day. On the 5th, they arrived at the Yass River near the site of old Gundaroo, and following the river down camped on the reach running westward below the modern Gundaroo. Here they caught five fish "like the Bathurst fish" (Murray cod). In the morning of the 6th they followed the river for some miles, and, finding it running in a north west direction and having caught more fish of a similar kind, they presumed it was the Lachlan and decided to turn back. Although their deduction was incorrect it is remarkable that, during their journey, they were not more than 3 or 4 miles from the head waters of the Lachlan. In the afternoon of the 6th, they travelled across country and returned to and camped at the Yass River near old Gundaroo.

### **Description of First Visit to Site of Canberra**

The narrative of the first visit by white men to the site of Canberra is recorded in their journal as follows:-

#### **Thursday 7th December, 1820**

'Time  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 6. Course, S.b.W. 3 miles,  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7, S.W. 9 miles. 11am., S.S.E. 12 miles.

"At daylight, calm and cloudy, Set out thro a fine forest country for 3 miles, ascending a Stony Range, Iron Stone and Barren Scrubby timber, Stringy Bark, Gum and Box; from this Range we had view of some clear grassy hills bearing N by West, Distant about 8 miles.

"Crossed a chain of ponds, rather indifferent country.

"Ascending a Stony Range, Barren and scrubby; at 11, on top of the hill; some beautiful clear plain in sight, bearing S. by E. ; an extensive chain of mountains running S.S.E. and N.N.W. thick hazy wr, with light showers of rain occasionally. We then descended the range into a scrubby country for about half a mile, then into a most beautiful forest country, gentle hills and valleys, well watered by streams, and a fine rich Black Soil. Came on to one of the plains we saw at 11 o'clock. At half past 1, came to a very extensive plain, fine Rich Soil and plenty of grass. Came to a Beautiful River plains that was running thro' the plains in a S.W. direction, by the side of which we slept that night. When we made the Hut this evening, we saw several pieces of stone that had been burnt by all appearances.

I then examined some of it, which proved to be limestone. We then went along the Banks of the River and found immense quantities of the same sort, some of which I have preserved as a specimen; this evening caught 3 fish of the same kind we caught before, throughout the Night, Calm and Cloudy.

#### **Friday, 8th December, 1820.**

At Daylight, cloudy wr, Wind E. Myself and Vaughan set out down the river in S.W. direction for the purpose of ascertaining which way the waters went; at 10 o'clock we ascended a very high hill from the top of which we had an extensive view all round; and, finding the waters still continue to run in a S.W. direction, we declined going down the River. We then returned to the hut, and staid for the Night ; the Banks of the River on both sides, the whole of the way we went which was a distance of near 10 miles, is a most beautiful forest as far as we could see, thinly wooded by Gums and Bastard Box, the tops of the Hills stony and Stone Sand, but in the valleys a fine Rich Soil; the banks of this River is flooded about 30 feet perpendicular. At Noon, hot sultry wr., saw several natives' fires at a distance, the first I have seen since I left the New country: this

afternoon myself and Wild went about 5 miles up the East part of the plains by the side of the River, and found 2 Branches, the one coming from the N.E., and the other from the Southward. Throughout the night, fine and clear."

**Marginal note on original.-** ' This agrees with my own observations and with the accounts of the natives, under which mountains they say a river runs to the S.E.- C. THROSBY.'

**Marginal note on original.-** 'This river or stream Is called by the natives Yeal-am-bid-gie: its situation and course perfectly agrees with my observations, when at Lake George.- C. THROSBY.'

It is evident that, on the 7th, Wild and his companions crossed the low ridge of hills which separates the watersheds of the Yass and Molonglo Rivers. From one of these hills, they observed the Canberra Plains, and, after crossing these plains, camped somewhere near Duntroon. In the evening, they discovered the deposits of limestone, which gave the first name to the district-Limestone Plains. In the following morning Smith and Vaughan went down the river and ascended 'a very high hill ' presumably Black Hill, where they saw the river running south-west past Yarrolumla. In the afternoon Wild and Smith travelled up the river to the site of Queanbeyan, 'and found two branches, the one coming from the N.E. (i.e., the Molonglo) and the other from the southward (i.e., the Queanbeyan)'

On the 9th December, Wild and his companions, the discoverers of Canberra, travelled direct to the southern end of Lake George where they had camped seven days previously and returned thence to the settled districts.

## **Discovery of the Murrumbidgee**

Charles Throsby was still determined to discover the Murrumbidgee and, with two companions, left Throsby Park near Moss Vale in March, 1821, for this purpose. He was successful in locating the river but it is difficult to determine the precise locality of the discovery, as a personal letter and not his journal is alone available. It is certain, however, that he travelled over the site of Canberra; that he traced the Molonglo River towards its junction with the Murrumbidgee, and that he discovered the Murrumbidgee, probably, a little below Point Hut crossing.

## **Explorations by Currie, Ovens and Wild**

The adventurous quest for knowledge of the country characteristic of the pioneers was again evident in the final major exploration of the Territory. This expedition was undertaken by a naval captain named Mark John Currie, and the brigade-major and captain of the 74th regiment, named John Ovens both of whom were untrained in bushcraft. In May, 1823, accompanied by Joseph Wild, they left Throsby Park to explore the country south of Lake George. On the 31st May, they camped on the river near the site of Queanbeyan. On the following day, they crossed the Limestone Plains; discovered a small plain which they named Isabella's Plain (now known as Tuggeranong) in honour of the daughter of Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane; arrived at the Murrumbidgee River; and, after ascending its right bank, being unable to cross, camped somewhere near Tharwa. During the following five days, they travelled southerly, more or less parallel with the Murrumbidgee River; crossed the Umaralla River under the impression that it was the Murrumbidgee; and on the 6th June, discovered the fertile plains which they called Brisbane Downs, but which are now known as the Monaro Plains.

The epoch of discovery closed with this expedition, and was followed immediately by the epoch of pioneer settlement.

## **Pioneer Settlers in the Capital Territory**

The Federal Capital Territory was first settled by men whose names are linked with many important events in Australian and English history, including the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. The outstanding figures in the first twenty years were J. J. Moore, Robert Campbell, G. T. Palmer, John MacPherson, Sir Terence A. Murray, and James Ainslie.

Moore, who arrived in Australia in 1816 with his brother-in-law, Judge Advocate Sir John Wylde, was a retired lieutenant of the 14th Regiment of Foot, and had served at the battle of Waterloo. In 1824, he became the first Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.

Campbell was the second son of the last laird of Ashfield in Scotland. In 1798, he settled in Australia, became the first merchant, and built up large mercantile and shipping interests. In 1825, he became one of the first non-official members in the nominee Legislative Council, and he held his seat until the final dissolution of that Council in 1843. He died in Duntroon in 1846. During his active life, he was probably the most trusted colonist and the greatest philanthropist in the community.

Palmer was a retired lieutenant of the 61st Regiment of Foot, and had served in Egypt at the time of the battle of the Nile. His father, John Palmer, arrived in 1788 with Captain Phillip in the First Fleet, and was for many years Commissary of the Colony.

Macpherson arrived in Australia in 1825 with his father, a retired army officer. As a reward for the capture of a bushranger, he was promised a land grant.

Murray arrived in Australia in 1827 with his father, a captain in the 48th Regiment of Foot. He became the first elected member for the district in 1843, and served continuously in different branches of the New South Wales legislature until his death in 1873. During this lengthy service, he was knighted, and, at different times, held office as Auditor-General, Secretary for Lands and Works, Speaker of the Assembly, and president of the Council.

Ainslie had been a trooper in the Scots Greys at the battle of Waterloo, where he was severely wounded in the head by a sabre cut. He was overseer for Robert Campbell, and was eccentric, his idiosyncrasy being probably resultant on his injury.

## **Initiation of Grazing**

After the conquest in 1813 and succeeding years of the barriers which had limited the extension of settlement; the abundance of natural pasture in the newly discovered areas was a powerful attraction to graziers, and the practise was adopted of forming a grazing station without permit or licence on vacant Crown lands. In some districts, such a station might be held by the same grazier undisturbed for many years. The first settlement at Canberra and in the Territory was a stock station, formed in this way at Acton by employees of John Joshua Moore, probably about the end of the year 1824. Moore, however, was not permitted to hold this area for any length of time. The rapidity with which the land on the Limestone Plains and neighbourhood was granted, purchased, or promised, indicates that its value was realised at an early date. During the years 1826-27, therefore, Moore purchased 1,000 acres at 5s. an acre, and erected thereon the building now used as the police station for Canberra. He subsequently purchased an additional 742 acres.

In 1825, Robert Campbell was granted land to the value of £1,000, and live-stock to an equal value as compensation for the loss of his ship "Sydney" in 1806, off the coast of New Guinea, when under charter to the Government. James Ainslie, his overseer, took delivery of 700 sheep

from the Government flocks at Bathurst; overlanded them via Yass to the Territory; settled on the south-eastern slopes of Mount Pleasant; and formed Duntroon. A few years later, Campbell's claim that the land was valued excessively at 5s. an acre was admitted; the value was reduced to 4s., and he was given an additional 1,000 acres to complete the compensation awarded. Less than eighteen months after Ainslie settled at Duntroon, Campbell obtained permission to purchase 5,000 acres on the south bank of the Molonglo River opposite Duntroon, and he thus became the first large landed proprietor in the Territory.

Within a few years of the formation of Moore's station at Acton, almost the whole of the land on Limestone Plains and a large proportion of the area in the neighbourhood were allotted to private holders.

George Thomas Palmer acquired a large area at Ginninderra, and 2,000 acres at Jerrabomberra, which had been promised to his father, were granted to him after his father's death.

John Macpherson's reward grant of 640 acres was located on the spurs of Black Hill and was named Springbank.

In partnership with Thomas Walker, Terence Aubrey Murray acquired 2,560 acres, which formed the nucleus of the Yarrolumla estate, and on which Murray erected the homestead where he resided.

About the end of the year 1836, Charles Sturt was staying at Yarrolumla, recuperating from the privations endured during his exploration of the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers from Jugiong to Lake Alexandrina. He there received a notice requiring the early selection of his reward grant of 5,000 acres. He forthwith selected an area between the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee Rivers and the Ginninderra Creek, and this grant was named Belconnel. Soon after, Sturt sold this grant to Charles Campbell, a son of R. Campbell.

So rapidly was the land alienated that, when he criticized the land administration after a visit to the Limestone Plains in 1834, John Lhotsky, the German naturalist, said:- "More especially the disposition of land is loudly claiming attention, if an Agrarian Law in some shorter or longer period is to be avoided. With regard to Limestone, this is now too late, the whole plains belonging by grant or purchase to a few (although very worthy) land-holders".

## **Early Social Conditions**

During the early years of settlement, conditions were primitive. The nearest post office was at Inverary, a few miles from Bungonia and about 60 miles from Canberra. The principal occupation was grazing; and, there being no fences, the sheep were shepherded, and the country side was dotted with shepherds huts. Even the homesteads were primitive; and, in 1834, Lhotsky described the cottage at Duntroon as the last house south of Sydney with windowpanes. Labour, principally as shepherds, was provided by convicts under the system of assignment and the supervision of the properties was left to overseers.

Within five years of its first settlement, the district became infested with gangs with armed bushrangers, who were absconding convicts and who existed by robbery and plunder. In 1828, a gang of six bushrangers was captured, the two leaders Tennant and Ricks, by Campbell's overseer, Ainslie, and Moore's overseer, Cowan, respectively, and four were tried and hanged. Large forces of military and mounted and foot police were frequently required to maintain order; but the convict type of bushranger was not suppressed until after the abolition of transportation and the extension of settlement in the forties.

Notwithstanding the primitive and disturbed conditions, the isolation, the entire want of social

intercourse, and the absence of medical aid, John Macpherson and his wife began to reside at Springbank on the slopes of Black Hill about the year 1832, and he was the first educated resident land owner in the Territory. In 1834, his son, John Alexander, was born at Springbank, and this son became Premier of Victoria in 1869 -1870, and Chief Secretary in 1875 -1877.

Within five years many land owners followed the example of Macpherson. Palmer took up residence Ginninderra, Murray at Yarrolumla, and Charles Campbell, the third son of R. Campbell, at Duntroon. In 1837, C. Campbell married the eldest daughter of G.T. Palmer, and initiated the long series of inter-family marriages characteristic of the district.

At this time, 1836, the population consisted half of convicts and half of free men. Two magistrates were Palmer, at Ginninderra, and Murray, at Yarrolumla; and, at these two homesteads, punishment were inflicted. In 1837, however, a resident magistrate was appointed, a doctor settled, a post office was established at Queanbeyan, and conditions began rapidly to improve.

### **Early Economic Conditions**

The economic conditions during the first twenty years of settlement were indicated by Charles Campbell and J.F. Murray, a brother of T.A. Murray, who had obtained the grant of Woden, in their evidence before a Select Committee in 1843. During the consideration of the Masters and Servants Act, Murray stated that the relations between master and servant were good in and about the district of Limestone Plains, whereas the reverse was generally the case in the other parts of the Colony. Campbell indicated the methods adopted by graziers in the district. He stated that sheep farming was remunerative, provided that a price of seven shillings a head could be obtained. The sheep were shepherded, and each station required a large staff of employees. On Duntroon and the adjoining station, 50 or 60 sheperds and watchmen were employed at wages of 20, 22 and 24 pounds a year and rations, or a cost of about 1,200 a year apart from the rations. Campbell advocated the settlement of the employees on each station in a group of cottages or "village", each cottage possessing a small cultivation area. By this plan, the employees became more settled and contented. The remains of such a "village" may be seen today near the old Palmer homestead at Ginninderra.

In the year 1838, one of the most severe droughts on record commenced, and it continued until the year 1842. All the creeks in the district dried up, very few water holes remained in the Molonglo River, and the Murrumbidgee ceased to run for two years. All the crops failed, and the price of wool fell from 36d in 1833 to 18d in 1841. Superimposed on these troubles, the financial crisis of 1843 occured, a happening characterized by many similar features to that of 1930-31.

One result of the financial depression was that sheep became almost unsaleable at any price. In 1843, the wages of shepards on the Duntroon estate were reduced from 24 to 18 a year, and of watchmen from 20 to 16. J.J.Moore, the first landed propietor was forced to sell his estate of 1742 acres at Acton to Arthur Jeffreys, R.N., who married the second daughter of Robert Campbell.

No immediate remedy for the financial chaos was forthcoming and many settlers were ruined. Some relief was obtained for the graziers by the passing of the Lien on Wool Act. Further relief was obtained from the introduction by H. D. O'Brian at Douro, near Yass, of the practice of boiling down. It was forced that by boiling down a full grown sheep the value of the products in tallow, skins, mutton hams, etc., was 14s. The result was that sheep recovered in value and sold at 5s to 8s a head.

### **Effect of the Discovery of Gold**



The financial restoration of Australia was largely due to the discovery of gold in 1851.

The "gold fever", which lasted for a decade or more, had, however, mainly indirect effects in the area now forming the Federal Territory. It caused a general betterment of conditions, but rendered the district liable to sporadic raids by bushrangers. A quiet and conservative epoch then began, and continued until the Territory became the property of the Commonwealth of Australia on the 1st January, 1911. There is probably no area in Australia, in which there have been fewer changes over an extended term of years.

## **Conditions Prevailing between 1841 and 1911.**

### **The Land-holders and their Descendants**

The system of assignment of convicts had ceased in July, 1841; and thereafter the number of convicts working for private individuals naturally declined, until free labour finally became universal. The lands in the Territory were well-managed, and, in most instances, the owners and their descendants resided on their properties for many years.

Charles Campbell managed Duntroon until 1855 and was succeeded by his brother, George, who resided there until 1876, when he went to England, where he died in 1881. After the death of George Campbell, his widow resided at Duntroon until her death in 1903. Charles Campbell had purchased Belconnel from Charles Sturt in 1837, and acquired other lands near Ginninderra, which he held until his death in 1888, when his son, Frederick, inherited.

Sir Terence Aubrey Murray, father of Sir Hubert Murray, Lieutenant-Governor of Papua, and Professor Sir Gilbert Murray, held Yarrolumla until 1858, when he sold the property to his brother-in-law, Augustus Gibbes, son of Colonel Gibbes, a former Collector of Customs. In 1881, Gibbes sold Yarrolumla to Frederick Campbell, who, when he inherited his father's estates in 1888, became the largest land holder in the district.

G.T. Palmer owned the Ginninderra estates until his death in 1854, when they passed to his son, G. T. Palmer, junr. William Davis, junr., married Palmer's sister, and acquired the estates. He built the new homestead at Gungahleen, and resided there until he sold to E. K. Crace in 1877.

Charles and Martin Byrne acquired Woden from J. F. Murray, the original grantee and later sold to Frederick Arthur Campbell, whose son still resides in the homestead.

Thomas McQuoid, Sheriff of New South Wales, was granted Tuggeranong about 1837, and on his death in 1841 bequeathed it to his son, Thomas Hyam.

T. H. McQuoid was drowned in the wreck of the Dunbar in 1857, and Andrew Cunningham acquired the estate. Cunningham had previously, in 1847, purchased the adjoining property known as Lanyon.

Uriarra was held by Alexander McDonald and his descendants from 1839 onwards. Tidbinbilla was held by George Webb and his sons from 1842 to 1875, when it was acquired by James Cunningham, then of Tuggeranong.

Alexander, Archibald and Charles McKeahnie each owned properties in the mountainous country in the south of the Territory for many years.

Large land holders settled in the district permanently, and several large properties have been held by successive generations of the one family, which is somewhat unusual in Australia. In the Campbell family, four generations have held property within the Territory. Amongst the smaller

land holders, a similar practice has often prevailed, and sons have succeeded fathers on the same farms as freeholders or tenants.

All members of the community were content to lead quiet lives, developing their properties, and rearing large families; and many families became closely connected by intermarriage.

## **Other Settlers**

It is remarkable also that, apart from land-owners, many others followed their occupations for unusually lengthy periods. The Reverend P. G. Smith was Rector at Canberra for over 50 years (1855-1906), and baptized, married, and sometimes even buried successive generations. W. F. Hayley was surgeon at Queanbeyan for 30 years (1837-1867), and was succeeded by Andrew Morton, who remained for many years, and their names were household words in times of sickness, death and accident. James Abernethy was schoolmaster at Canberra for 17 years (1863-1880) and taught successive generations of children.

## **Transport Facilities.**

During the period of the "gold fever", Cobb and Co. established regular communication with Sydney by a daily coach from Picton to Goulburn, and a tri-weekly coach from Goulburn to Queanbeyan. The time of journey from Goulburn to Queanbeyan was thirteen hours, i.e., from 1 a.m. to 2 p.m. In 1867, the railway was opened to Goulburn, and, in 1886, to Queanbeyan. In 1860, a post office was established Ginninderra, in 1861 at Lanyon, and in 1863 at Canberra. At first a mail was received three times a week, and the time of transit from Sydney was 50 hours which, three years later, was reduced to 38 hours. In 1881, a daily mail was established, running three days a week via Queanbeyan, and three days a week via Collector and old Gundaroo.

As time went on, although the ownership remained in the same families, slab huts were replaced by pise houses, and later brick, stone, or weatherboard buildings. Old homesteads were extended or demolished and new homesteads erected on the same or new sites.

Owners improved their properties, and the most striking change was the abolition of shepherds and the introduction of fencing. F. Campbell at Yarrolumla was prominent in making changes. He subdivided his estate into over sixty paddocks, cleared the forest land, and cleaned and dried the flukey country by an extensive system of drainages. Bullock teams were replaced by horses, spring carts by buggies and sulkies, and tools by machines. The community was conservative and self contained, and probably would have so remained for another 100 years, if Canberra had not been selected as the site of the Federal Capital.

## **Conditions after 1911**

### **Commonwealth Control**

The Commonwealth of Australia was established in 1901, and, even before that date, Canberra was suggested as the capital site. It is not necessary here to detail the history of the selection of Canberra as the capital city for Australia. One needs only to note the date, 1st January, 1911, when the Commonwealth of Australia assumed possession of the Federal Territory and the site of Canberra.

With the transfer of the Territory to the Commonwealth, freehold tenure was abolished; and it was provided that all Crown lands, and all privately-owned land after resumption, should for ever

remain the property of the nation. This alteration in tenure caused a cessation in the transfer of properties from father to son, which was so marked a feature of the preceding epoch.

## **Resumption of Lands**

For the purposes of the capital city large resumptions of land became necessary. The first area to be resumed was the land which had been originally taken up on behalf of J.J Moore in 1824, and sold to A. Jeffreys in 1843. In February 1911, 1,780 acres were resumed from A.H. Jefferys for £9,743 after he and his forbears had been in possession for 68 years. In July 1912, 30,451 acres of Duntroon were resumed for £144,690, the Campbell family having held the area for 87 years and 39,640 acres of Yarrolumla were resumed for £149,662, the property of F. Campbell for 31 years, together with the Belconnel estate which he or his father had held for 75 years. In 1916-17, 21,060 acres of Tuggeranong and Tidbinbilla were resumed for £78,093 this estate having been occupied by the Cunningham family for 60 years. Up to date, 213,830 acres have been resumed at a total cost of £791,837.

## **Leasing of Resumed Lands**

Since its resumption the land, apart from the area reserved for the city of Canberra, has been subdivided and leased to 170 lessees in small areas for grazing and farming, whereas, prior to resumption, more than half the resumed land was held in four estates. No figures are, however, available to show whether the production and thereby the contribution from the lands of the Territory towards the national income have been increased or diminished through this drastic change. As the population of the Territory at the census in 1911 was 1,714 persons, practically all of whom were on the land, and as the population on the 30th June, 1930, resident in the Territory on the land outside the city of Canberra, was 1,963 persons, an increase of 249 persons in nineteen years, it is evident that closer settlement has caused no large increase in the population on the land.

## **Plan of the Federal Capital**

The history of the world competition for a city plan, of the selection of the design submitted by W. B. Griffin, of the naming of the city by Lady Denman in 1913, of the various forms of administration during the past twenty years, and finally of the opening of Parliament at Canberra in 1927 by H.R.H. the Duke of York have been detailed in previous volumes of the Official Year Book.

## **Finances of Canberra**

The finances of Canberra are more involved and therefore more misunderstood possibly than any other public finances in the history of Australia. One of the principal reasons for this has been the provision in the Seat of Government Administration Act of 1924, that the capital liability of the Territory should include all expenditure, from the 1st January, 1901, with annual interest added, on the selection and establishment of the capital of the Commonwealth. When the Act came into operation on the 1st January, 1925, the total liability of the Territory was on this basis £3,409,561. This sum included the net expenditure, less net receipts, £2,966,600 and the sum of £442,961 for interest since the financial year 1902-3. Since the 1st January, 1925, this initial liability has been subject to an annual increment of £88,017 for interest: and, with these annual increments, on the 31st December, 1930, the sum of £971,063 is included in the capital liability of the Territory for interest, some of which has accumulated since 1901. Included in the expenditure £2,966,600, there is the sum of £351,804, expended on administration, maintenance, selection of a capital

site, visits of parliamentarians and pressmen to these sites, etc., etc. The capitalization of costs of administration, maintenance, interest on these costs, and interest on expenditure creating no tangible assets, prior to the 1st January, 1925, amounted at the 31st December, 1930, to the sum of £1,322,867, or about 12 1/2 per cent. of the presumed total cost of the capital city and the Territory.

Included in the capital liability of Canberra, there are certain large sums, which represent the funding of expenditure incurred for national purposes without creating any tangible asset, and also other large sums expended on national works, a part of which would in all probability have been paid from the Consolidated Revenue of the Commonwealth, if the Federal Capital Fund had not been established by the Act of 1924.

All available facts seem to indicate that the foundation of Canberra has been an excellent financial investment for the Commonwealth. The nation will ultimately occupy its own buildings, erected on its own cheaply acquired lands, and supplied with its own water supply and sewerage, and will derive its electric light and power under special and favourable conditions, statutorily enacted by the Seat of Government Acceptance and Surrender Acts of 1909. The nation eventually will no longer pay for essential services to State, municipal or private corporations, and will no longer pay rent to States or private persons for office accommodation in buildings on expensive sites in State Capitals.

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